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## MALTA.

*Malta fever—Cause and diagnosis.*

S. S. MALACCA, PORT SAID, EGYPT,

*August 29, 1903.*

SIR: I have the honor to report that on the 25th instant there was a short stop at Valetta, Malta, and that I embraced the opportunity to visit the military hospital, which contains over 300 patients, most of whom were afflicted with Malta fever. The principal medical officer went over a number of cases carefully, showing the temperature and pulse chart, and discussing each one.

The diagnosis can now be made at an early date by use of the micro-coccus melitensis after the method of Widal, and, as in enteric fever, the time at which rest and treatment begin makes a decided difference in the prognosis. There is no claim for a specific remedy, but the claim was made that with care and intelligent general treatment from the start the mortality had been reduced from 15 to about 2 per cent.

The method of infection is still under discussion, but my informant was of the opinion that the specific organism is air-form and that it is inhaled.

The patients did not appear to be very sick, but some of them were said to be classed as serious, whose appearance was not to me the least alarming. The tongues were very little coated; in fact, a light gray coat in the center, with clean edges, was said to be characteristic. I would think that the complications, with the possible exception of the intestinal, are practically the same as those of enteric fever.

Respectfully, yours,

E. T. SPRAGUE,

*Passed Assistant Surgeon.*

## MEXICO.

*Colombian Government quarantines against Mazatlan.*

Consul Kaiser at Mazatlan reports, August 28, that the Colombian Government has issued a decree quarantining all vessels touching at Mazatlan, notwithstanding the fact that the port is reported clean.

*Reports from Progreso and Merida—Yellow fever.*

Acting Assistant Surgeon Harrison reports as follows: Week ended September 13, 1903. Present officially estimated population, 8,000; number of deaths, 7.

General sanitary condition of this port and the surrounding country during the week, fairly good. In Merida 44 deaths were reported for period from July 6 to 10, inclusive, including 3 from yellow fever.